

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Fiscal Year 2006 Budget Request

Witness appearing before the
House Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to present the fiscal year (FY) 2006 President's budget request for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The FY 2006 budget includes \$1,277,544,000, an increase of \$7, 223,000 over the FY 2005 enacted level of \$1,270,321,000 comparable for transfers proposed in the President's request.

The mission of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development is to ensure that every child is born healthy and wanted, that women suffer no harmful effects from the reproductive process, and that children have the chance to fulfill their potential for a healthy and productive life, free of disease or disability. I have prepared a statement for the record that highlights the science of the entire Institute that will be discussed in tomorrow's NIH hearing. Today I will focus on the research supported by the NICHD that bears directly on fostering the healthy development of children from birth to school entry to ensure that they are physically robust, emotionally healthy, socially competent, and cognitively ready to learn. In doing so, I will emphasize our interactions with the Administration for Children and Families.

NICHD research in early childhood development is critical for several reasons. First, the quality of our children's early experiences has a significant impact on their entire lives. Second, the more that parents, child and health care professionals and teachers know about what children should learn and experience during early childhood and the factors and conditions that support cognitive, social, and emotional development during this period, the greater the probability that children will grow up healthy and learn effectively. Third, without the benefits of informed, evidence-based, and coordinated comprehensive early childhood programs, many children, particularly from impoverished backgrounds, are likely to experience difficulties in school, as well

as the emotional, social, and occupational deprivation that follows on the heels of school failure.

A SUMMARY OF SELECTED RESEARCH PROGRAMS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS

The NICHD currently supports extensive research on the biological, cognitive, educational, behavioral, socioemotional, cultural, and familial factors that influence early childhood development. The research program in early learning and school readiness develops and supports research to specify the interactions and experiences children need from birth to age eight to prepare them to learn, read, and succeed in school. Projects supported to date focus on early interactions with adults and peers and the development of early education programs to stimulate language, literacy, and social and emotional capabilities in a comprehensive and integrated fashion. Research teams are studying interventions to prepare at-risk children for success in school across the range of settings that serve young children. This funding of the research network is a strong example of current interagency collaboration as it is supported by the NICHD, the ACF and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), within HHS, and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) within the U.S. Department of Education. This research program has also developed a comprehensive initiative to support the development of assessment and measurement tools and strategies to provide sound data on children's competence across multiple domains of functioning in early childhood.

At Dr. Lyon's testimony before this Committee last year, several members of the committee requested that the NICHD work with the ACF and other agencies to develop greater capacity for measuring social and emotional abilities of children from birth

through five years of age. In response to this request, the NICHD, working closely with the ACF and OSERS developed a large scale, multi-year research initiative to develop tools and strategies capable of adequately assessing the social, emotional, and cognitive competence of preschool children. Following extensive planning between the organizations, the request seeking applications from the scientific community was published in November 2004. It is expected that six to 10 multi-year projects will be supported with the research beginning September 2005.

The research program in cognitive, social and affective development, child maltreatment and violence develops scientific initiatives and supports research and related training to better understand the normative cognitive, social, affective, and personality development from the newborn period through adolescence, and on the impact of specific aspects of physical and social environments on the health and psychological development of infants, children, and adolescents. Special emphasis is placed on studies of child development processes in high-risk settings (e.g., families experiencing stressors such as poverty, unemployment, and parental depression as well as violent and/or abusive environments).

The NICHD also supports a large portfolio of research related to families and children, including research that seeks to explain changes in marriage, the rise of nonmarital cohabitation and nonmarital childbearing, the effects of family change on children's health and development, father involvement and its benefits for children, child care arrangements of working families, and the impact of parental work/family conflict on children's health and well-being.

RESEARCH ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL BEING OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The NICHD and the ACF have jointly supported many large-scale projects that provide information about our nation's children and families, and the broad social and economic factors that affect their well being. These include joint support for:

- The Three Cities Study of Welfare Reform and the Well-Being of Children, a multi-level (communities, families and individuals), multi-method (survey research, ethnography, developmental assessments) study located in Boston, Chicago, and San Antonio. This study examines family responses to welfare reform (employment, schooling or other forms of training, residential mobility, and fertility) and the effects of these responses on children's health and development. It was this study that provided evidence that welfare reform requiring mothers to work did not have measurable adverse effects on the development of young children and in fact had some beneficial effects on adolescents.
- The Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study, which follows a birth cohort of (mostly) unwed parents and their children over a five-year period. The study is designed to provide information on the capabilities and relationships of unwed parents, as well as the effects of various policies on family formation and child well being.
- The Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project, for which the NICHD collaborated with the ACF and others to develop a "fatherhood" component. The resulting studies examined the role that low-income fathers play in the lives of

their infants and toddlers. The NICHD's role included supporting the interviews with fathers, helping to design the fatherhood studies, and securing private funding for a joint observational study of infant-father interaction.

- The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort, which follows a cohort of babies born in the U.S. in 2001 to assess their development, health, and school readiness. NICHD contributions have strengthened components of this Department of Education-sponsored study related to health and fatherhood, while ACF contributions have strengthened components related to childcare.
- The National Survey of Family Growth, conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics, which is part of CDC, is a primary source of national information on childbearing, marriage and divorce, and adolescent pregnancy. The NICHD is a primary funder of the project and the ACF has contributed funds for general support and for support on information about adoption.
- Over the past 20 years the NICHD has sponsored research on child support and its effect on family and child well being. On many occasions, the ACF has jointly supported the research or sponsored spin-off projects to elaborate research findings in terms of child support enforcement. Over the years, these efforts have led to the establishment child support collection schedules that are widely used in many states, efforts to promote child support payment and/or marriage, and efforts to strengthen father involvement with their children.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF RESEARCH AND DATA

The NICHD partners with the ACF on numerous projects that address the quality and content of research and data on America's children and families. For example:

- The Science and Ecology of Early Development (SEED) initiative, an interagency initiative designed to stimulate multidisciplinary research on low-income children's developmental trajectories. Poverty among children is associated with an array of problems. SEED fosters scientific endeavors on the multiple contexts surrounding the process of child development: family, childcare settings, schools, communities, and broader cultural and policy contexts.
- The Research Network on Child and Family Well-Being, a group of scientists and federal officials that worked for over a decade to facilitate multi-disciplinary research on family and child well being and to make research findings in this area accessible to the public policy process. Key topics addressed by the Network included fatherhood, measurement in family demography, childcare, welfare reform's impacts on children and families, and indicators of child well-being.
- The Work, Family, Health, and Well-Being Initiative, a research initiative with the ultimate goal of creating an interdisciplinary network to conduct studies that employ experimental design methodologies to test which types of workplace policies and practices are the most beneficial for the health and well-being of workers, their families and children, communities, and workplaces within a

variety of workplace settings. ACF staff in the Child Care Bureau contributed intellectually to the framing of the initiative and to funding the first and second launching conferences.

Another NICHD study of major relevance to the ACF is the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development. This prospective longitudinal birth cohort study of more than 1,000 families has provided data on the developmental impact of infant day care. This study has given valuable information and reassurance to families in which the mother returns to work soon after childbirth.

Staff of the ACF has performed a valuable role in current planning of the National Children's Study (NCS). We envision that this study of environmental influences on children's health and development will be the largest study ever undertaken of the impact of social, family and community factors, as well as physical, chemical and genetic factors on children. The ACF is one of more than 40 Federal agencies involved in the planning of this study. The proposed NCS is particularly important because it would make possible the identification of cause and effect relationships rather than just associations or correlations. This study would make enormous contributions to our knowledge of child development.

Mr. Chairman, our collegial relationship and interaction with the ACF benefit the Nation's children. I will be glad to answer any questions.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME	Duane Frederick Alexander, M.D.
BIRTH	August 11, 1940, Baltimore, Maryland
MARITAL STATUS	Married Marianne Ellis, Washington D.C., June 23, 1963; two children
EDUCATION	Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, B.S. Degree, Pre-Medical, 1962 Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, M.D. Degree, 1966
INTERNSHIP	Intern and Fellow, Department of Pediatrics, Harriet Lane Service, Johns Hopkins Hospital, 1966-1967
RESIDENCY	Assistant Resident and Fellow, Department of Pediatrics, Harriet Lane Service, Johns Hopkins Hospital, 1967-1968
MILITARY SERVICE	1968-1970: Surgeon (LCDR), U.S. Public Health Service, and Clinical Associate, Children's Diagnostic and Study Branch, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, Maryland 1971-2000: From Surgeon to Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service
FELLOWSHIP	Fellow in Pediatrics (Developmental Disabilities), John F. Kennedy Institute for Habilitation of the Mentally and Physically Handicapped Child, Johns Hopkins Hospital, 1970-71
LICENSURE	Maryland Board of Medical Examiners
CERTIFICATION	Diplomat, American Board of Pediatrics, 1973
POSITIONS HELD	
1971-74	Assistant to the Scientific Director, NICHD, NIH
1974-78	Medical Officer (Staff), National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, DHEW
1978-82	Assistant to the Director, NICHD, NIH
1982-86	Deputy Director, NICHD, NIH
1986-present	Director, NICHD, NIH

Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Budget

William R. Beldon

Mr. Beldon is currently serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary, Budget in the Department of Health and Human Services. He has been a Division Director in the Budget Office for sixteen years, most recently as Director of the Division of Discretionary Programs. Mr. Beldon started in federal service as an auditor in the Health, Education and Welfare Financial Management Intern program. Over the course of more than 30 years in the Budget Office, Mr. Beldon has held Program Analyst, Branch Chief and Division Director positions. Mr. Beldon received a Bachelor's Degree in History and Political Science from Marshall University and attended the University of Pittsburgh where he studied Public Administration. He resides in Fort Washington, Maryland.